



# CANAL AREA

OPPORTUNITIES  
IN THE HEART OF BRUSSELS

be canal  
be .brussels 



# THE CANAL AREA

## OPPORTUNITIES IN THE HEART OF BRUSSELS



The Canal area, a **strategic development axis for Brussels**, is located in the heart of the city, a few minutes' walk from the Grand-Place and the historical centre. It crosses the entire central part of the Brussels-Capital Region, lying on both sides of the Canal that links the European capital to the North Sea.

This industrial zone in transformation offers **plenty of space and numerous opportunities** for investment, innovation and ambitious projects in all fields: housing, business, hotels and restaurants, shops, culture, and so on.

The authorities in Brussels and at federal level have, with the support of the European Structural Funds, **increased investments in land enhancement, improvements to equipment, infrastructure, buildings and public spaces**, the construction and renovation of housing, and so on, in order to provide a favourable environment for residents, businesses and visitors.

In recent years, **many ambitious projects**, in both the **private and public sectors**, have entered the construction phase in the Canal area or have already been opened, including the new **European school** (picture) near the Royal Palace of Laeken, the construction of the tallest **residential tower** in Belgium and the **first hotel to overlook the Canal**. Among the many other projects which will soon appear are a **new sustainable district**, a **terminal for cruises** and an **eco-business park**. That is the reason why the Government has initiated the development of the Canal Plan which is intended to guide the development of this area.

Momentum is being gained and the Canal area still offers plenty of opportunities, for which various institutions in Brussels are looking for partners.

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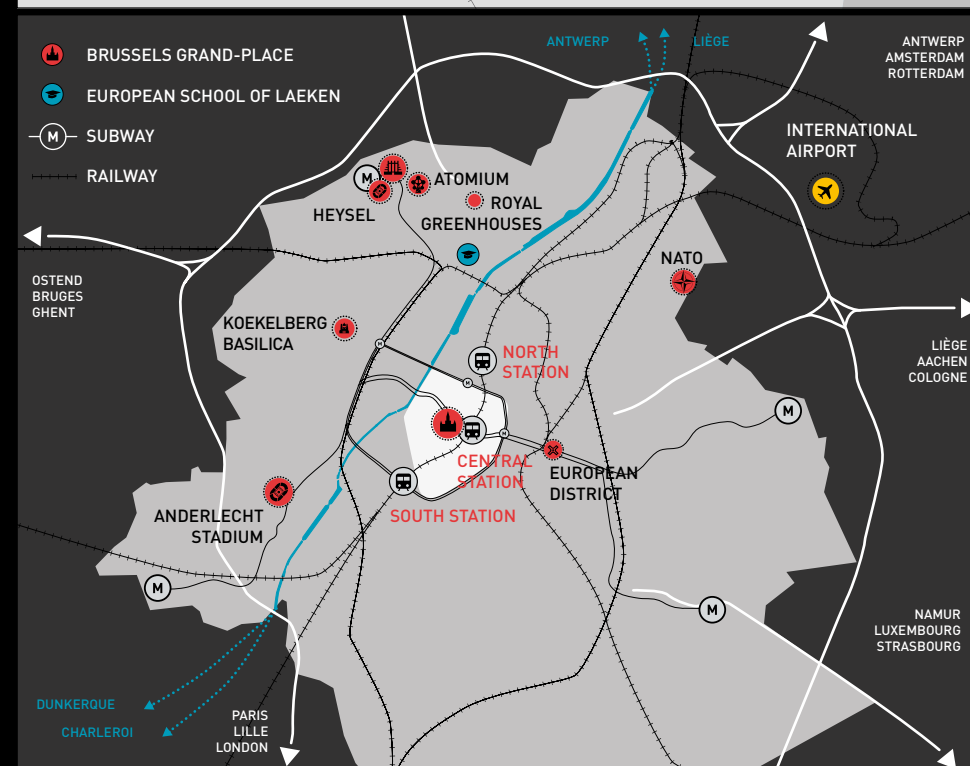
WEBSITE FOR THE CANAL AREA  
AND THE CENTRAL DISTRICTS  
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## AT THE CROSSROADS OF EUROPE



Brussels, the **European capital**, is home to major international institutions such as the **European Commission and NATO**. It also hosts the European Parliament, more than **2,000 international organisations** (making it the leading city in the world in this respect), a thousand non-governmental organisations, **4 European schools** (with 9,000 students), **5,000 diplomats**, **159 embassies**, representations from 300 cities and counties, 15,000 lobbyists and around **1,200 foreign journalists** working for hundreds of media companies. With an area of **161 km²**, the **Brussels-Capital Region** has some **13 million m²** of offices and

nearly **90,000 companies**, including about **1,300 foreign companies**. Its **1.1 million inhabitants** are joined every day by more than **330,000 commuters and tourists** who generate more than **5.5 million overnight stays** per year.

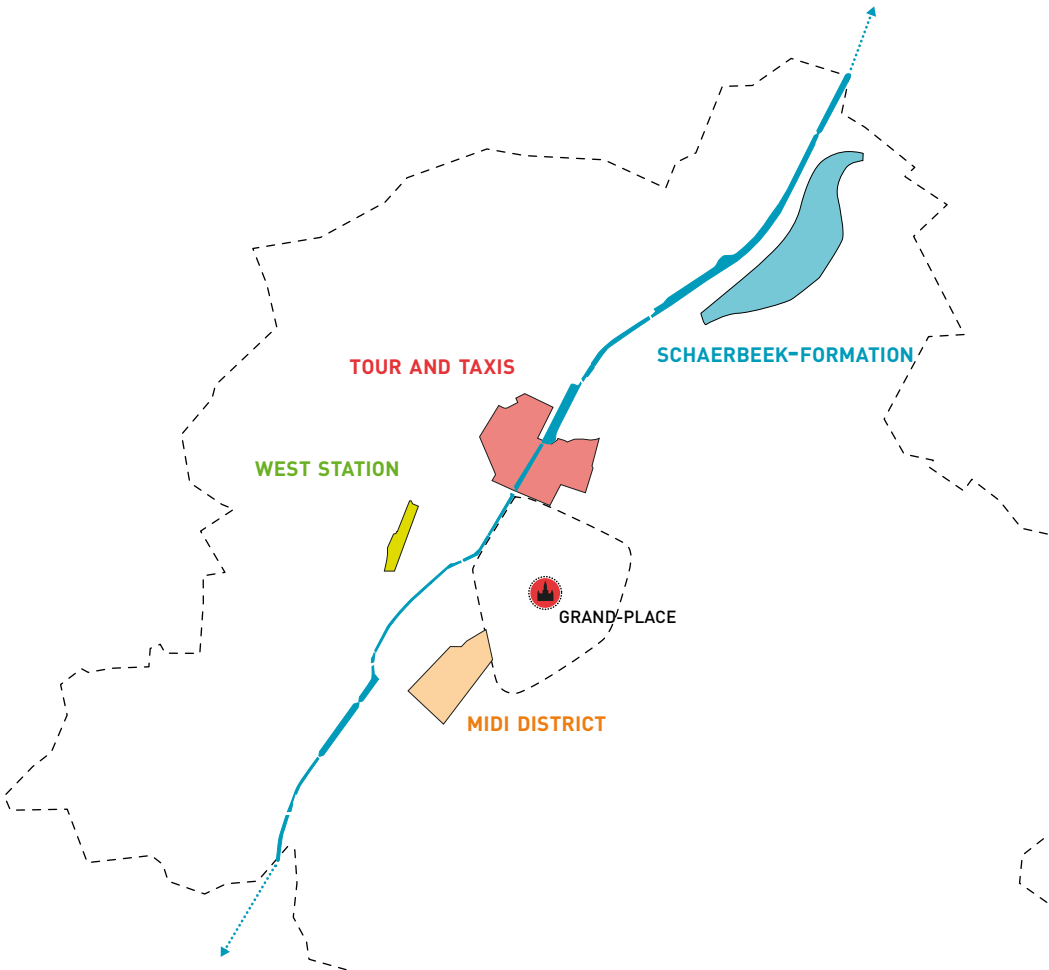
Brussels is also a communication hub located at the heart of **Europe's transport networks**. It is on the **High-speed rail network** (Eurostar, Thalys, ICE), enjoys close proximity to an international airport, and is a sea port and the **sixth busiest European inland port** in terms of tonnage, linked to the North Sea via Antwerp.

# AN AREA ON THE MOVE



The Canal area is the historical heart and former industrial zone of Brussels, and represents a strategic development axis for the European capital. It is home to the youngest population and is experiencing the fastest population growth, and is also characterised by significant real estate potential, including land vacated by industry and buildings, often of great character, waiting to be reused. Among the various regional development poles, 4 are located in this part of the city (Schaerbeek-Formation, Tour and Taxis, West Station, Midi District). Since the creation of the Brussels-Capital Region in 1989, the local, regional, federal and European authorities have also invested heavily there in renovating buildings, improving public spaces, fostering training, upgrading infrastructure and facilities...

The strategic nature of the Canal area is underlined by its inclusion in several tools recently developed or under development: Canal Plan (the orientation plan for the development of the Canal area: see page 9), the Zone for Economic Urban Stimulation (ZEUS: see pages 14 and 15), the Regional Sustainable Development Plan (PRDD-GPDO, the strategic plan for the Region to 2020), the Regional Land Use Plan and its Enterprises Zones in an Urban Area (PRAS-GBP and ZEMU-OGSO), the Guiding-Plan for the urban renewal and the future ERDF programming 2014-2020.



## DEVELOPMENT POLES OF THE CANAL AREA

4 development poles have been identified of major territorial, urban and economic importance due to their strategic position, the extensive land availability, the communication nodes ...

### SCHAERBEEK-FORMATION

A railway site destined to become a multimodal logistics platform, a zone with major facilities of regional significance and creation of a new mixed-use and sustainable neighborhood.

### TOUR AND TAXIS

Former railway site and historic buildings in the process of conversion: SMEs, tertiary activities, restaurants, fairs and events, headquarters of Brussels Environment, sustainable district, regional park...

### MIDI DISTRICT

Around the South railway station (High-speed hub) several projects ) to link up districts separated by the railway lines, connect the station to the city centre, create housing, businesses and hotels, rationalise tertiary sites, and improve the intermodality of public transport (train, bus, tram, metro).

### WEST STATION

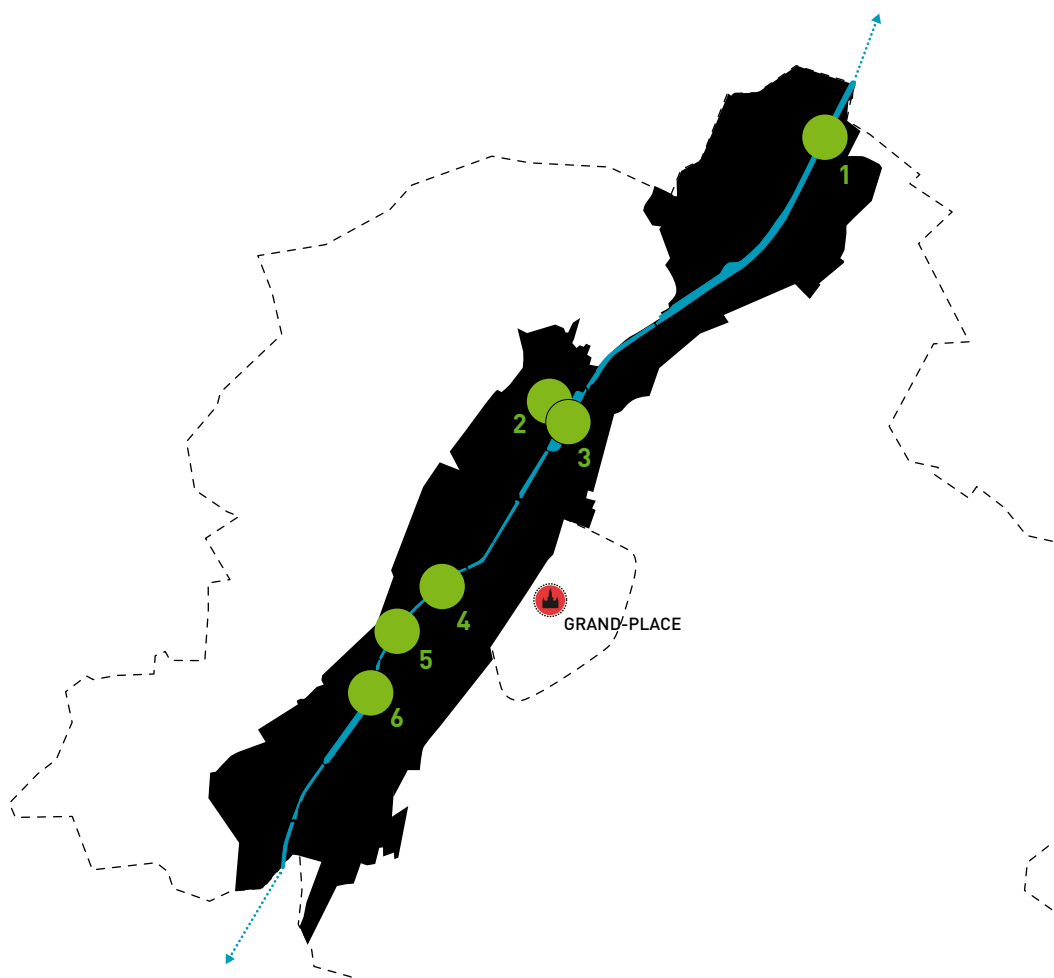
Around this communication node (metro, railways, buses and trams), land is available for housing, neighbourhood facilities, shops and offices.

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## THE CANAL PLAN AREA

The French architect, urban developer and landscape designer Alexandre Chemetoff was appointed by the Minister-President of the Brussels-Capital Region to develop a Plan for the Canal area.

Chemetoff, who among other past projects drew up the plans for the urban redevelopment

of the Île de Nantes, was selected after a European-wide tendering procedure which attracted numerous prestigious tenders.

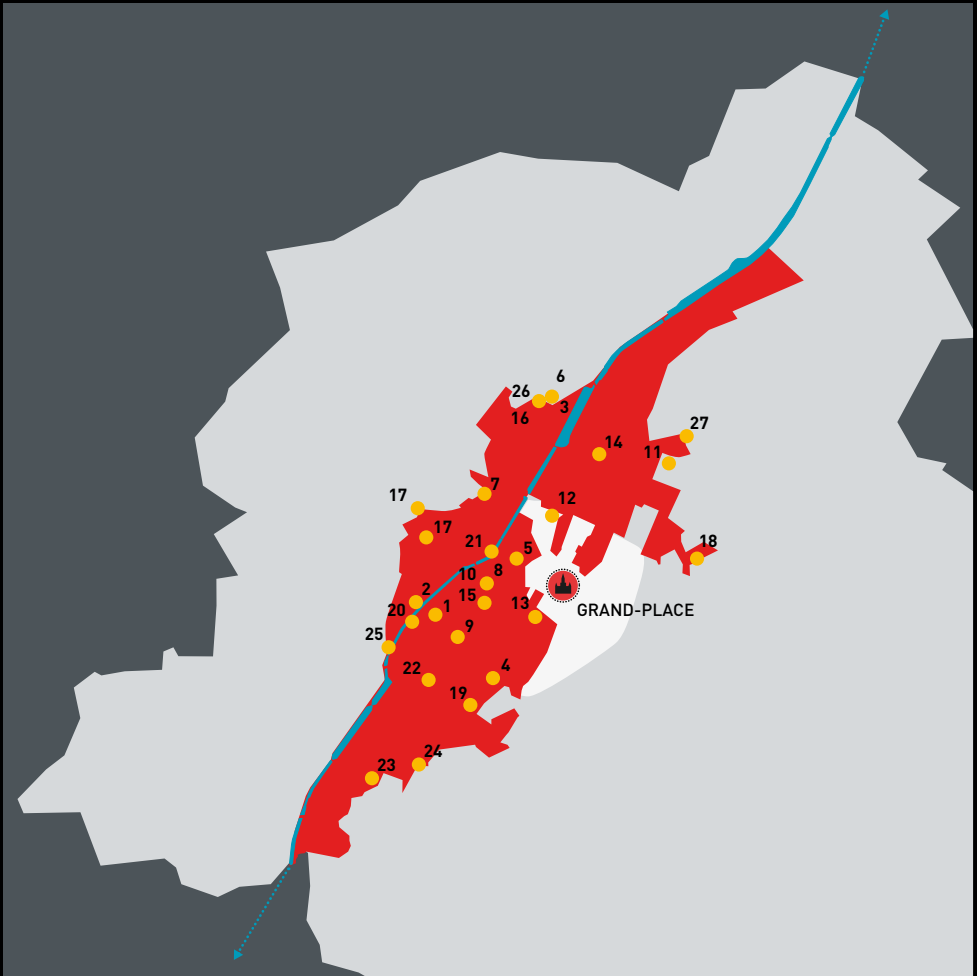
The objective of this orientation plan is to define a clear, ambitious and shared vision for the future of this area, in order to improve its territorial and social cohesion.

### PRIORITY PILOT SITES

After the first phase of development of the Canal Plan, the Government has identified six priority pilot sites in the Canal area:

1. BUDA
2. TIR-CENTER
3. VERGOTE
4. HEYVAERT
5. BIRMINGHAM
6. BIESTEBROECK

## PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY EUROPE



### THE ELIGIBLE AREA

FOR PROJECTS FOR THE 2007-2013 PROGRAMMING PERIOD OF THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (ERDF) - 160 MILLION EUROS FOR 34 PROJECTS

#### → PROJECTS SHOWN ON THE MAP

1. Abatan 2020
2. Brussels Ecopôle
3. Brussels Greenbizz
4. Cenforgil
5. MAD Brussels - Mode and Design Center
6. Centre d'excellence construction durable
7. Advanced Technology Centres (CTAs) for industrial automation
8. CTA for residential and industrial electricity
9. CTA for green and renewable energy

10. CTA for infographics and the graphic industries
11. CTA for chemicals
12. CTA for childcare and nursing
13. Nurserie Elmer in de Stad
14. Nurserie Etoile du Nord
15. Nurserie Les Tulipes
16. Nurserie Maison Rouge
17. Nurseries Rives Ouest
18. Nurserie Station
19. Nurserie Verhaegen
20. Emovo
21. Espace Hôtelier Belle-Vue
22. École des Vétérinaires
23. Park SMEs Paepsem
24. Foresthoreca

25. Port Sud - Canal Innovation
26. Urban economy cluster
27. Employment and economic development cluster

#### → PROJECTS ACTIVE IN THE WHOLE AREA

- Boost Your Talent
- Brusoc
- Brussels Greenfields
- Brussels Sustainable Economy
- Urban Marketing
- Open Soon
- Village Finance

# AN AREA

## FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT



The Canal area runs along both sides of the waterway connecting Brussels to the North Sea via Antwerp. It covers 9.2% of the surface area of the Brussels-Capital Region and hosts 15% of its population. It is the area of the city with the youngest population (more than 50% of the population is under 30 years) and the fastest population growth.

Since 1989, the Region and municipalities have stepped up initiatives to improve housing, facilities and the public space. This has in particular occurred through 38 of the 60 district contracts<sup>(1)</sup> that have received 600 million euros of public investment.

The Urban Renewal division of Citydev.brussels (formerly BRDA) has, in partnership with private investors, also built more than 1,000 housing units at controlled prices and is working on several new projects representing some 400 additional dwellings.

Here too, on the banks of the Canal, a private developer is currently erecting Belgium's tallest residential tower block, also one of the tallest in Europe, at 140 metres and 42 storeys. On the opposite bank, a completely new sustainable neighbourhood, Tivoli, will be created on four hectares of land situated close to the historic Tour and Taxis site which is currently being redeveloped: there will be some 400 passive homes, a park, a nursery, shops, and a business incubator for environmental businesses (Brussels Greenbizz).

Overall, the Region expects an influx of 140,000 additional inhabitants between now and 2020. It therefore wishes to develop a diversified housing stock, promote passive or exemplary buildings and for this purpose to form a series of partnerships with various operators and investors in order to make optimal use of the available real estate potential, especially in the Canal area.

<sup>(1)</sup> Transformed in 2010 in "sustainable district contracts"

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AREA COVERED BY THE VARIOUS DISTRICT CONTRACTS <sup>(1)</sup>



# AN AREA

## FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION



The Brussels-Capital Region is one of Belgium's economic powerhouses: although the people of Brussels represent just 10% of the Belgian population, Brussels generates 19% of GDP and 15% of employment in Belgium.

In Brussels, many entrepreneurs and investors have chosen the Canal area to grow their businesses, attracted in particular by its proximity to the major communication routes, the available space and the wide range of facilities for businesses accommodation.

More than 6,000 companies are present in this area, generating a combined total of more than 7.5 billion euros of added value per year.

The Canal area still offers many opportunities for economic actors wishing to set up in the heart of the European capital. Thus, the creation at the beginning of 2014 of the Zone for Economic Urban Stimulation (ZEUS) aims to promote the establishment of businesses in the territory (see opposite). And moreover the Region develops a series of projects to promote green economic sectors, particularly in connection with green building, renewable energy and sustainable economy.

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## → PUBLIC BODIES AT YOUR SERVICE TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS

Whether you want to develop a large company, a small business, or a shop, a variety of public bodies are there to support your project, advise you and propose partnerships.

### → Do you want to set up your business or invest in innovative sectors?

Impulse.brussels makes it easy for anyone setting up a business to find the specific information and identify the key persons who will help them to develop their projects.

### → You want to develop a shop, a restaurant, a bar ...

The Regional Agency ATRIUM assists aspiring retailers and caterers in their search for premises and offers specific subsidies for them to set up in certain central districts.

### → Are you looking for land or premises?

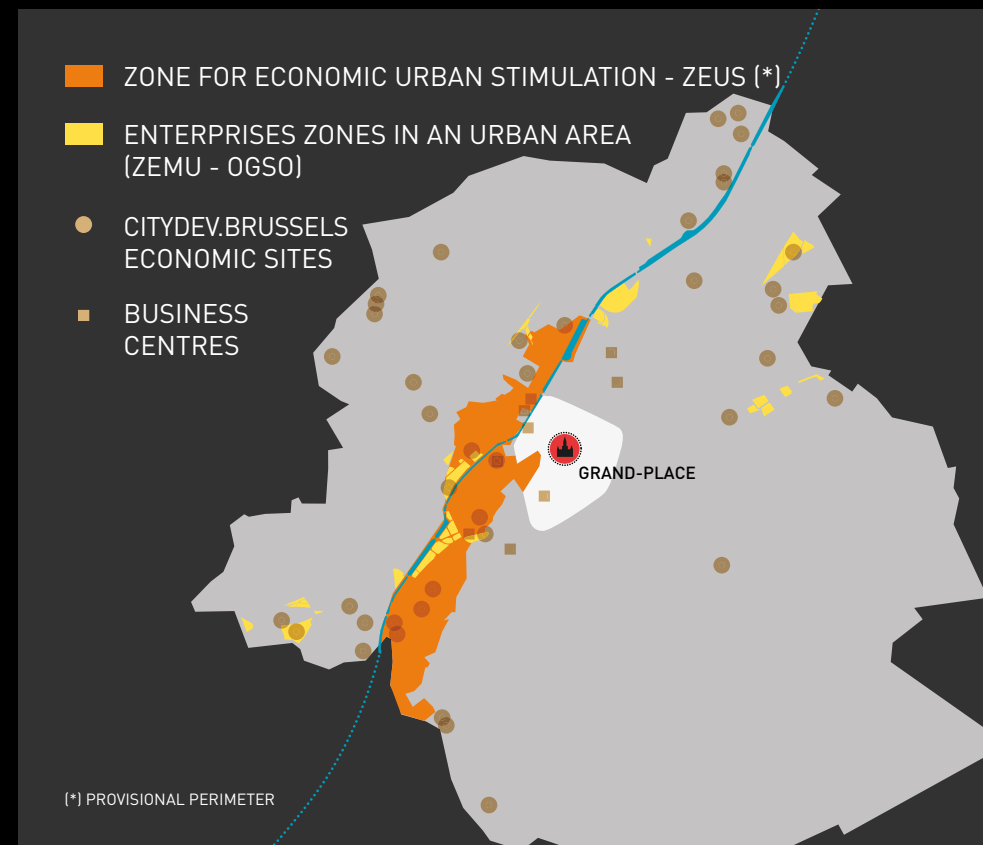
Citydev.brussels has 200 hectares of business parks and land for companies across 45 sites, as well as a series of business centres and incubators. The majority of these premises are located in the Canal area.

### → Are you looking for funding and grants?

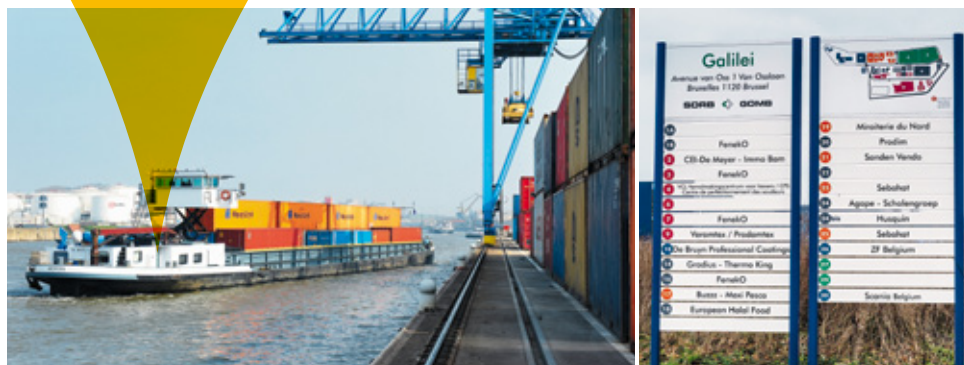
The Brussels-Capital Region offers a range of grants or preferential rate loans. These financial instruments are even more attractive in the new Zone for Economic Urban Stimulation (ZEUS), which coincides with the Canal area.

### Do you want to set up in the development poles by the Canal?

The Urban Development Agency (ADT-ATO) monitors 10 development poles in Brussels, four of which are located by the Canal (Tour and Taxis, Midi District, Schaerbeek-Formation, West Station).



## AN AREA FOR LOGISTICS AND URBAN BUSINESSES



Brussels, the **sixth busiest European inland port**, lies at the centre of Europe's communication networks. This sea port which can accommodate seagoing vessels of up to 4,500 tonnes is open 24 hours a day, with a five-hour sailing time from Antwerp. The **Port of Brussels**, which manages the 14 km stretch of the Canal in Brussels and the port facilities, has 5.5 kilometres of quays, **85 hectares of land**, a **containers terminal**, **warehouses** (a TIR Centre), and so on, to serve companies.

The port is a **customs, warehousing and distribution centre**, and hosts a variety of activities, including agri-food, construction, energy, chemicals and logistics. It is continuing to grow, in particular with the creation of a **new sustainable port economic zone** of nearly 9 hectares for urban businesses and a logistics warehouse. The 300 jobs created will be added to the approximately **12,000 jobs** at 360 companies located in the port area, which is a major supply centre for Brussels: the transportation of **7 million tonnes** of goods by water **saves 670,000 trucks** from entering the city every year.

The Canal area also has a variety of large-scale infrastructure related to the food sector: the **Mabru morning market** (40,000 m<sup>2</sup>, 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> of refrigerators, 1,600 parking spaces...); the **European Fruit and Vegetables Centre** (25,000 m<sup>2</sup>, 64 stores with cold rooms...); logistics and warehousing centres, including refrigeration; the **Abattoirs** (10.5 hectares, around a hundred companies, 100,000 visitors to the weekend markets...), with a development project that includes an 11,000 m<sup>2</sup> food market with space for restaurants, a compact abattoir of 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>, urban warehouses and an urban farm on the roof.

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## PORT AND LOGISTICS ACTIVITIES



# ANOTHER BRUSSELS

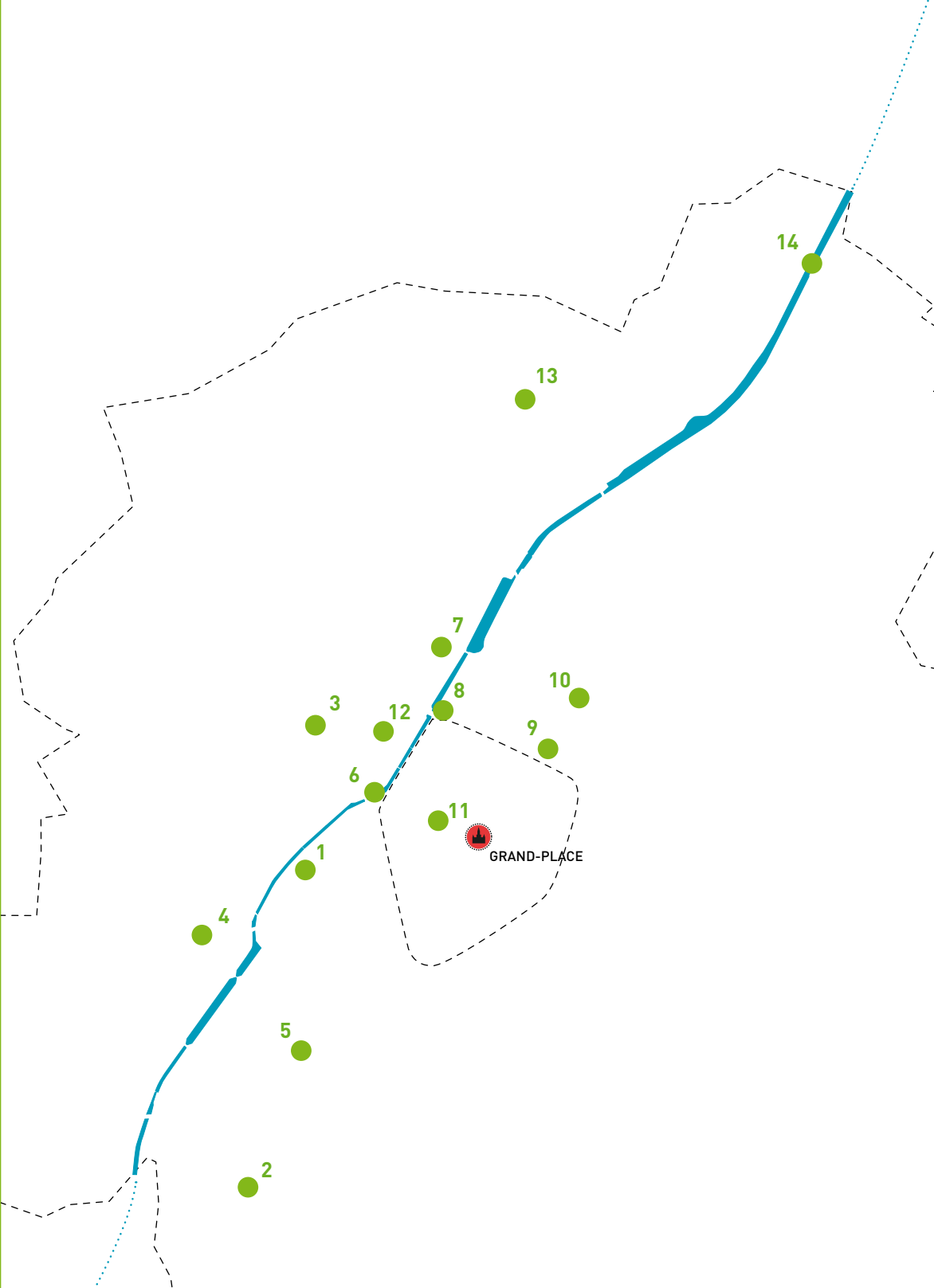
JUST 10 MINUTES  
FROM THE GRAND-PLACE



The Canal area runs through many vibrant, living, and dynamic districts, each with its own history, identity, and atmosphere. These central districts of Brussels are the beating heart of the city, a melting pot of cultures and activities, from local associations to major cultural institutions of international repute, from exotic markets to trendy bars, from starred restaurants to colourful eateries.

And then there are the major cultural and recreational events: the Book Fair attracts some 70,000 visitors in March, the Couleur Café music festival more than 75,000 spectators in June, the temporary beach of Bruxelles-Bains welcomes 250,000 to 400,000 people in July and August, while the new Brussels Light Festival attracted more than 85,000 spectators for its first edition in 2013.

Just ten minutes from the Grand-Place and the most tourist-thronged streets of the European capital, the Canal area reveals another side of Brussels, with many notable buildings bearing witness to its history. This is an area of Brussels with no shortage of tourist attractions for those who want to stray from the beaten path. It welcomes the first hotel to overlook the Canal and a youth hostel nearby. This is also an area of Brussels which hosts intense cultural and creative activity, particularly in the areas of fashion and design.



## OVERVIEW OF SOME ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IN THE CANAL AREA

- |                                  |                          |                                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. ANDERLECHT ABATTOIRS          | 6. BELLE-VUE BREWERY     | 12. CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST |
| 2. FOREST ABBEY                  | 7. TOUR & TAXIS          | 13. ROYAL GREENHOUSES OF LAEKEN      |
| 3. VANDENHEUVEL BREWERY          | 8. CITROËN YSER GARAGE   | 14. BUDA BRIDGE                      |
| 4. ERASMUS HOUSE                 | 9. BOTANIQUE             |                                      |
| 5. WIELS CONTEMPORARY ART CENTRE | 10. HALLES DE SCHAERBEEK |                                      |
|                                  | 11. HALLES SAINT-GERY    |                                      |

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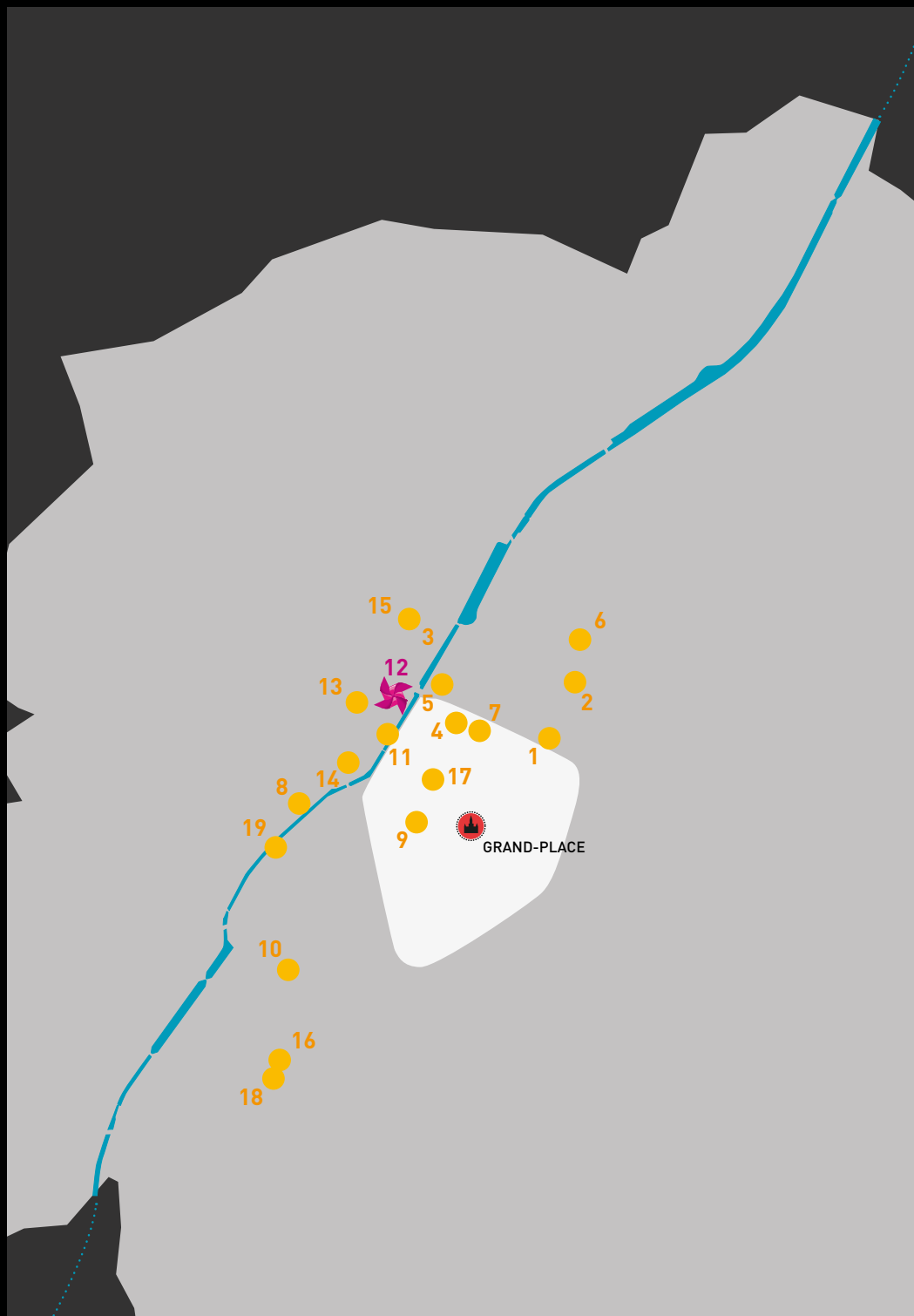


## OVERVIEW OF POINTS OF TOURISTIC INTEREST IN THE CANAL AREA

1. BRYC  
(Brussels Royal Yacht Club)
2. SAILING CLUBS (4)
3. K'NAL
4. BRUXELLES-LES-BAINS
5. MIDI FAIR
6. PLAISIRS D'HIVER
7. COULEUR CAFÉ  
MUSIC FESTIVAL
8. BRUSSELS BY WATER

9. TRAIN WORLD  
(opening in 2014)
10. HOTEL MEININGER  
BRUSSELS CITY CENTER  
(former Belle-Vue Brewery)
11. GÉNÉRATION EUROPE  
YOUTH HOSTEL
12. SAINT-GÉRY /  
DANSAERT DISTRICT
13. TOUR AND TAXIS

14. CANTILLON BREWERY  
Brussels Gueuze Museum
15. PORT SUD  
(under construction)
16. SEWER MUSEUM
17. MIDI MARKET
18. FUTURE PASSENGERS  
TERMINAL



## OVERVIEW OF CULTURAL LOCATIONS AND EVENTS IN THE CANAL AREA

- |                                |                              |                            |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. BOTANIQUE                   | 10. THE EGG                  | 15. COULEUR CAFÉ           |
| 2. HALLES DE SCHAEERBEEK       | La comédie de Bruxelles      | (Music festival)           |
| 3. TOUR AND TAXIS              | 11. IMAL (Centre for digital | 16. WIELS (Contemporary    |
| 4. KVS (Royal Flemish Theatre) | cultures and technology)     | art centre]                |
| 5. KAAI THEATRE                | 12. MOLENBEEK CULTURAL       | 17. LA CENTRALE ÉLECTRIQUE |
| 6. OCÉAN NORD THEATRE          | CAPITAL 2014                 | (Contemporary art centre)  |
| 7. NATIONAL THEATRE            | 13. MAISON DES CULTURES      | 18. FONDATION A            |
| 8. CHARLEROI DANSES            | DE MOLENBEEK                 | (Photography museum)       |
| LA RAFFINERIE                  | 14. LA FONDERIE (Brussels    | 19. CAVES DE CUREGHEM      |
| 9. RICHES CLAIRES              | Museum of industry and work) |                            |

# A CENTRE FOR CREATIVITY IN THE HEART OF BRUSSELS



In the heart of Brussels, the **Dansaert** district has been at the epicentre of a boom in the creative, fashion and design sectors: here you will find renowned stylists, designers, jewellers and milliners, as well as bars and trendy restaurants.

This growth originated fifteen years ago as a result of a series of designers who turned Brussels into an internationally recognised avant-garde capital. It has overflowed to the surrounding neighbourhoods and spread to the banks of the Canal, with designer furniture and high-quality fabric shops, residences for artists, and business centres for young designers.

In recent years these districts have also seen the convergence of the cultural and creative industries: graphic design and web design studios, communication and advertising agencies, architectural firms... They have also become a showcase of Brussels creativity with events such as Brussels Design September, Modo Parcours and Festival Kanal.

MAD Brussels (Mode And Design Brussels) is a driving force in this process, supporting designers, facilitating encounters between different disciplines and promoting the avant-garde image of Brussels in the world.



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